

HIGHLIGHTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE OFFICE ACTIVITIES

October 2006-December 2006

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF DECEMBER 25, 2006

Turkey English Language Fellow Conducts Pronunciation Seminar for Teachers

On December 27, 2006, thirty English teachers in the English Language Preparatory Program at **Mugla University** in Turkey received lesson plans, tips, and resources to aid in teaching Turkish students English pronunciation. English Language Fellow **Suzie Sims-Fletcher** provided handouts with common sound problems specific to Turkish speakers including a list of words of particular difficulty for native Turkish speakers learning English. The OELP texts *Effective Techniques for English Conversation Groups* and *Varieties of American English* were introduced to the thirty teachers in attendance. Practice of sound formation and discussion of proper articulation were wrapped up with tongue twisters and limericks.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF DECEMBER 19, 2006

Educators in Turkey Complete Rigorous Online Course Aimed at Improving English Teaching and Training: Two Turkish English Language Teacher Trainers from **Cukurova University** in Adana and English Language Fellow **Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert** based at the Ministry of Education in Ankara completed the 12-week pilot online based on the new Office of English Language Program teacher training product “Shaping the Way We Teach English.” 50 educators from 15 different countries participated in the distance education course facilitated by the University of Oregon. The instructors will join the remaining 47 educators, over 30 English Language Fellows, and five English Language Officers in Cairo for a ‘way forward’ conference in January 2007.

English Language Fellow Fields Questions about the ELF Program During a Press Conference Featuring the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey: On December 18, 2006, English Language Fellow **Rohini A. Parikh** based at **Selcuk University** in Konya, answered questions about the ELF Program during a press conference held between the Rector of Selcuk University, Suleyman Okudan, and the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Ross Wilson. Later that day, Rohini also answered questions about the ELF Program at the Opening Reception for the new Turkish-American Association (TAA) Office in Konya.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF DECEMBER 1, 2006

English Language Specialist Brings Culture to the Classroom During South East Turkey Tour: English Language Specialist **Gayle Nelson** traveled with English Language Officer **Maria Snarski** and Turkey's National Coordinator for the English Language Fellow Program **Jill Cargile** to four institutions in Turkey's southeast region to address the question of cross-cultural communication, teaching culture in the classroom, and the idea of a culture of learning during the week of December 3, 2006. During presentations at **Gaziantep University**, the **American Corner** based at Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, **Cag University** in Mersin, and the **Turkish-American Association** in Adana, Dr. Nelson reached out to over 450 educators, students, and business professionals with ideas such as essentialism, universalism, and particularism to what happens in the classroom, outside the classroom, as well as in business meetings involving people with different cultural backgrounds be they of different nationalities or different ethnic backgrounds.

Online Course Helps Instructors Shape the Way Turkey Teaches English: On December 8, 2006, twenty-four secondary English teachers and three **Ministry of Education** officials met in Ankara to attend the orientation for a blended (face-to-face and online) fourteen week teacher training course based on the new teacher development offering by the Office of English Language Programs - *Shaping the Way We Teach English*. English Language Fellow **Monica Wiesmann-Hirschert**, posted at the Ministry of Education, kicked off the intensive professional development course. The program will offer course participants an in-depth look into new ELT trends and best practices found throughout the world. Teachers will engage in discussion to share classroom experiences, develop and implement projects based on course modules, and shape the way they teach high school English in Turkey. Participants will also devise an implementation plan to introduce course content to other teachers at their institutions.

Embassy Official Promotes American Corner, Fulbright Program During Trip to Izmir: Embassy Ankara Public Affairs Officer **Dan Sreebny** conducted a December 4, 2006 television interview at the **American Corner** in Izmir, with leading local television station Ege Television. The interview featured the American Corner resources for students and visitors, while promoting the US-Turkey Fulbright program. During their December 3-5 visit to Izmir, **Sreebny** and English Language Officer **Maria Snarski** also met with rectors and department heads at Izmir's three main universities, and visited a project with English Language Specialist **William Smalzer** and Turkish English teachers which is producing new English Language textbooks for use in Anatolian high schools throughout Turkey.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF DECEMBER 4, 2006
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English Language Teaching Symposium in Turkey Offers New Approaches: On December 1, 2006 the English Language Teaching (ELT) Department at the Faculty of Education at **Abant Izzet Baysal University** in Bolu hosted a one-day ELT Symposium organized by Bolu's English Language Fellow **Mora Hockstein**. The guest speakers included three English Language Fellows: **Jill Cargile** (Ankara), **Monica Wiesmann-**

Hirchert (Ankara), and **Laraine Altun** (Istanbul) as well as English Language Officer **Maria Snarski** (Ankara). The audience consisted of 150 ELT undergraduate students, twenty high school students, and seventeen local English instructors. The presenters delivered dynamic interactive presentations covering such pertinent topics as fostering writing habits in young learners, encouraging learner responsibility, and teaching English with games and music.

Turkey ELFs Bring Creative Ideas to the Classroom: On November 28, 2006 English Language Fellow (ELF) **Jill Cargile** presented a seminar on "Creative Activities" to twenty teachers at the **Turkish American Association** in Ankara. Teachers participated in integrated skills activities using pictures, stories, fairy tales, and recipes to develop discussion, reading and writing tasks. Several activities from Selected Articles from the OELP's "English Language Forum Creative Classroom Activities 1989-93" were used as model activities before participating teachers were asked to create their own activity to share with other teachers. In **Mugla**, ELF **Suzie Sims-Fletcher** formed an "Email Pal Club" to help students with their writing skills. An enthusiastic student group of forty-six welcomed the opportunity to work on their English ability while using their knowledge of computers.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF NOVEMBER 27, 2006

Turkey English Language Fellows Kick Off Teacher Seminar Series in Ankara: On November 25, 2006 at the **Turkish American Association** in Ankara, five English Language Fellows launched the first of a series of TAA Teacher Seminars of the academic year for an audience of twenty-one university English instructors and pre-service teachers. English Language Fellows **Jill Cargile**, **Rohini Parikh**, **David Mulvihill**, **Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert**, and **Mora Hockstein** provided three seminars: Promoting Critical Thinking Skills in Teaching Writing, Computer Assisted Language Learning, and Ongoing Classroom Assessment Techniques. The seminar on Promoting Critical Thinking Skills used the OELP text *Highlights of American Literature* for an excerpt from *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Handouts and materials from the seminars have been made available on the US Embassy Ankara's English Language Office website at: http://ankara.usembassy.gov/english_language_programs.html

Turkey ELF Shares Thanksgiving Traditions: On November 21, 2006, Suzie Sims-Fletcher, English Language Fellow at **Mugla University**, visited 110 students at **Gazi Anatolian High School** in Mugla, Turkey, as part of **Ms. Sims-Fletcher's Holiday Happenings** school visitation series. Prepared with pictures of American life from the OELP card set *Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.* as well as drawings of pilgrims, turkeys and the Mayflower, Ms. Sims-Fletcher and her Turkish colleague presented the students and their teachers with the history of Thanksgiving and described typical dinner menus.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20, 2006

ELF Opens “Club Hollywood” at Turkish University: On November 15, 2006, thirty-eight students at **Mugla University** in southwestern Turkey participated in the opening of “Club Hollywood”, a conversation group, with ELF **Suzie Sims-Fletcher** serving as emcee. The club will meet for two hours each week, where participants will watch English language TV/movies or listen to music/radio programs followed by discussion and idiom investigation. Texts provided by the OELP -- such as *New Ways in Teaching Culture*, *American Ways*, and *Varieties of American English* – were used for activities and reference. Students were excited by the discovery of new terms and idiomatic expressions.

HIGHLIGHTS WEEK OF NOVEMBER 13, 2006

ELF Organizes Organizational Skills Seminar for Teachers in Turkey:

On November 9, 2006, thirty-three Foreign Language Preparatory School teachers and administrators at **Mugla University** attended an outlining and organization seminar given by ELF **Suzie Sims-Fletcher**. With an emphasis on application in teaching, writing, test taking, and speaking situations, Ms. Sims-Fletcher spoke about streamlining communication. Details of how this tool and other organization tips could be implemented in a variety of communication situations were presented and a lively discussion ensued.

HIGHLIGHTS NOVEMBER 6, 2006

English Language Fellow Launches Professional Development Workshop Series for Education Faculty in Bolu: On November 1, 2006 English Language Fellow **Mora Hockstein** organized and kicked off the first of eight 2-hour professional development workshops for the English Language Teaching Faculty in the Education Department at **Abant Izzet Baysal University**. The workshop entitled "Effective Group Work Strategies" modelled and analyzed structures and techniques for the effective creation, implementation, and management of group work activities for students in the English Language Teaching Department.

Ankara’s English Language Office Participates for First Time in Istanbul’s International Book Fair: The **English Language Office** in Ankara along with the **Information Resource Center** (IRC) from Istanbul hosted a booth at the annual Book Fair held in Istanbul from October 28 – November 5, 2006. The 25th annual book fair included over 500 booths of publishers and bookstores which attracted over 330,000 visitors including dozens of schools and students during the ten days. ELO Assistant **Aycan Yaman** stayed throughout the week to greet visitors, explain and sell titles available, and take orders for those books that sold out during the event. The three most popular titles at the fair from the Office of English Language Programs were 1) English Grammar and Technical Writing 2) Reference Guide to English and 3) Talking English.



Caption: Visitors at the English Language Office during the 25th Annual International Book Fair in Istanbul October 28- November 5, 2006.

Manhattan Photography Exhibit Featured at ELT Conference in Turkey

Cultural Affairs staff member **Hakan Yurdadogan's** photographs were featured at **Turkey's English Language Teachers' Association's (INGED)** annual ELT Conference in Konya held at Selcuk University from November 3-5, 2006. Over 250 in-service and pre-service English language teachers met in the city of Konya for three days to share research, classroom ideas, and discuss the latest trends in English teaching. Mr. Yurdadogan introduced his Manhattan photographs at the opening ceremony of the three-day conference immediately following a presentation about nearby ancient archeological discoveries in the area emphasizing the importance of understanding difference cultures and the role English language could play. English Language Fellow **Rohini Parikhi**, who is from Manhattan, is based at **Selcuk University** and offered to answer any questions related to Manhattan and the places featured in the photographs.



Caption: Participants from the ELT Conference at Selcuk University, Konya, viewing the photographs of the Manhattan Exhibit November 3, 2006. 2006.

ELF Vampire Visits Three Schools in Turkey

Halloween, October 31, 2006, **Suzie Sims-Fletcher**, English Language Fellow, visited three schools in **Mugla**, Turkey, as part of her Holiday Happenings school visitation series. Dressed as a vampire, she treated students to an introduction of pumpkin carving, trick or treating, and costuming (OELP book *Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.* was used as a reference). They showed their teeth with English pronunciation exercises “V as in Vampire” and “W as in Witch,” followed by the poem *Five Little Pumpkins*, assisted by Mugla University colleague Deniz Sen. A lively Q and A session ended with questions like: What does your flag look like? Is America big? and How many seas do you have?

English Language Fellow Gives Presentation on Teaching Grammatical Accuracy: English Language Fellow David Mulvihill gave a presentation on teaching grammatical accuracy at Çukurova University's Department of Foreign Languages in Adana during the week of October 30. The presentation focused on both theoretical foundations for pedagogical approaches to grammatical accuracy as well as practical techniques which language instructors can utilize in their own classrooms. Attended by approximately 25 of the department's instructors, it provided a opportunity to not only review the various methodologies utilized in grammatical instruction but it also allowed for a valuable discussion of the role such types of instruction plays in the second language curriculum. Such a discussion is especially pertinent to Turkey, since as pointed out by many of the presentation participants, there has historically been a heavy emphasis on rule-based grammatical instruction. Also discussed was the value of utilizing authentic materials as an important tool in facilitating grammatical accuracy. The presentation was concluded with a brief review of some current materials developed for use in grammar instruction.

HIGHLIGHTS OCT 31, 2006

English Language Fellow Delivers Vocal Hygiene Seminar to 43 Teachers in Turkey: At Mugla University, English Language Fellow **Suzie Sims-Fletcher** conducted a hands-on workshop on October 19, 2006 entitled "Protecting Your Teaching Tool: Vocal Hygiene" to kick off a series of ten seminars to be held throughout the academic year. Ms. Sims-Fletcher had 43 faculty members on their feet practicing proper breathing, relaxation techniques, and voice exercises. In addition, she provided an introduction to using the teaching voice more effectively in the classroom to counter poor acoustics and resonating student voices. Some of the "Practices to Avoid" (shouting, smoking, caffeine, eating late at night) were met with eager interest. Teachers were given handouts to review and use in training students who are English Education majors.



CAPTION: On October 19, 2006, English teachers at Mugla University, Turkey, watch as English Language Fellow Suzie Sims-Fletcher demonstrates how to relax the voice to prepare for demanding speaking tasks.

HIGHLIGHTS OCT 17, 2006

ELFs from Five Cities throughout Turkey Engage in Discussion to Shape the Way English is Taught: During the week of October 9th, six ELFs posted throughout Turkey started an online discussion based on the review of ***Shaping the Way We Teach English***, a new teacher training series developed by the Office of English Language Programs. The ELFs involved in the discussion: **Laraine Altun** (Istanbul), **Jill Cargile** (Ankara), **Mora Hockstein** (Bolu), **David Mulvihill** (Adana), **Rohini Parikh** (Konya), and **Monica Wiesmann-Hirchert** (Ankara) are reviewing the 14 modules of the *Shaping* program and discussing ways to implement this training program effectively at their host institutions in the five cities. Through this initiative, these ELFs will also be able to provide invaluable insight during the upcoming *Shaping the Way Forward* meeting to be held in Cairo in January 2007, which aims at discussing the program's contents and how to best implement it in other regions.

HIGHLIGHTS OCT 3, 2006

Eight English Language Fellows Join Fulbright Scholars for Orientation in Ankara:

The English Language Fellows posted throughout Turkey for academic year 2006-2007 met at the **Turkish American Association** in Ankara from September 26-30 for the in-country orientation, part of which was shared with this year's Fulbright scholars in Turkey. A variety of essential topics were covered including Turkish-American relations, domestic politics, gender relations in Turkey, and Turkish art and culture. Participants also benefited from key briefings on security, health, and consular services. One of the high points of the program was a reception held by U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson at his residence at which both ELFs and Fulbright Scholars were the guests of honor for an educational networking event. Key sessions for ELFs were led by ELO Maria Snarski during which *Office of English Language Programs* materials were introduced and distributed. ELFs also had the opportunity to meet the board members from the English Language Education Association in Turkey (INGED) to discuss future collaboration. The in-country orientation was capped off by an extremely valuable Turkish language and culture workshop provided by the Turkish American Association.



Caption: English Language Fellows during their in-country orientation on September 28, 2006 in Ankara, Turkey holding up their first mutual understanding resource: a book explaining American culture written by a young Turk.